

Secondary Skills

A Basic Fantasy RPG Supplement

Basic Fantasy Website: basicfantasy.org

Release 1

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INTRODUCTION

This supplement defines a new system of *Secondary Skills* for player and non-player characters for use with the Basic Fantasy Role-Playing Game rules. If you do not already have a copy of the Basic Fantasy RPG rules, please visit the website and download a copy.

Secondary Skills

Any additional skills from a character's background are considered secondary skills. These are skills that the character has from before their adventuring lives or skills that could be considered part of their character class. It is a method to flesh out a character and make them more unique.

The Skill Check Mechanic

All of the character's skills start at level 1 and use the target number on the ability roll chart. When the player performs a skill action they roll the d20 modified by the ability score of the skill. The roll must be greater than or equal to the target number on the Ability Rolls chart in the Optional Rules section. Every level after 1st, the character gets 3 skill level points that he can apply to any skill or skills he sees fit, so long as the skill level does not exceed his character level.

If the character has a background or additional knowledge in a skill (like the son of a blacksmith) then award that character a +1 bonus on skills that deal with the addition knowledge. The player and the game master should consider this option together.

All skills on another class list are considered non-skilled and have a target number of 20. These skills can not be raised through the use of skill level points. Using a non-skilled skill from the general list or your character's class list has a target number of 17.

Skills List and Descriptions

Characters may select skills from the general skills and their class skills sections.

General Skills

Appraise – INT

You can appraise common or well-known objects with an Appraise check. Failure means that you estimate the value at 50% to 150% (2d6+3 times 10%,) of its actual value.

Appraising a rare or exotic item requires a successful check against a Target Number of 17 or higher. If the check is successful, you estimate the value correctly; failure means you cannot estimate the item's value.

Craft (a single type of craft, e.g., armorer, bowyer, glass blower, leather-worker, potter, shipbuilder, silver-smith, wheelwright, weaver) – INT

A Craft skill is specifically focused on creating and/or repairing something. If nothing is created by the endeavor, it probably falls under the heading of a Profession skill rather than Craft. The character would be considered a "Master Craftsmen" with this skill. Time and proper materials are required to be present to succeed.

Diplomacy – CHA

You can change the attitudes of others with a successful Diplomacy check. In negotiations, the game master adds the number of skill points in the character's diplomacy skill to the Reaction roll on the Reaction Roll table. More than one roll may be required for checks to resolve situations when two advocates or diplomats plead opposite cases in a hearing before a third party.

Handle Animal – CHA

This task involves commanding an animal to perform a task or trick that it knows. If the animal is wounded or frightened, the target number increases by 2. If your check succeeds, the animal performs the task or trick.

“Push” an Animal

To push an animal means to get it to perform a task or trick that it doesn't know but is physically capable of performing. This category also covers making an animal perform a forced march or forcing it to hustle for more than 1 hour between sleep cycles. If the animal is wounded, the target number increases by 2 levels. If your check succeeds, the animal performs the task or trick on its next action.

Teach an Animal a Trick

You can teach an animal a specific trick with one week of work and a successful Handle Animal check. An animal can learn a maximum of six tricks. Possible tricks include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following.

Attack: The animal attacks apparent enemies.

Come: The animal comes to you, even if it normally would not do so.

Defend: The animal defends you (or is ready to defend you if no threat is present), even without any command being given. Alternatively, you can command the animal to defend a specific other character.

Down: The animal breaks off from combat or otherwise backs down. An animal that doesn't know this trick continues to fight until it must flee or its opponent is defeated.

Fetch: The animal goes and gets something. If you do not point out a specific item, the animal fetches some random object.

Guard: The animal stays in place and prevents others from approaching.

Heel: The animal follows you closely, even to places where it normally wouldn't go.

Perform: The animal performs a variety of simple tricks, such as sitting up, rolling over, barking, and so on.

Seek: The animal moves into an area and looks around for anything that is obviously alive or animate.

Stay: The animal stays in place, waiting for you to return. It does not challenge other creatures that come by, though it still defends itself if it needs to.

Track: The animal tracks the scent presented to it.

Work: The animal pulls or pushes a medium or heavy load.

Jump – STR

Long Jump: A long jump is a horizontal jump, made across a gap like a chasm or stream. At the midpoint of the jump, you attain a vertical height equal to one-quarter of the horizontal distance. The target number for the jump is equal to the distance jumped in feet.

High Jump: A high jump is a vertical leap made to reach a ledge high above or to grasp something overhead. The target number is equal to 4 times the distance to be cleared.

Labor (type of manual labor, e.g., brick layer, carpenter, farmer, miner, sailor)

The character is very accomplished at a particular type of manual labor. These are the types of labor that do not require large amounts of skill but do require some training.

Knowledge

(alchemy/arcana/engineering/history/religion/tactics) – INT

The character has understanding of one of these fields of study:

Alchemy (chemistry and the elements of nature)

Arcana (ancient mysteries, magic traditions, arcane symbols, cryptic phrases, constructs, dragons, magical beasts)

Engineering (buildings, aqueducts, bridges, fortifications, etc.)

History (royalty, wars, colonies, migrations, founding of cities)

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Religion (gods and goddesses, mythic history, holy symbols, undead)

Tactics (troop movements, sieges, naval maneuvers)

Perform – CHA

The character is proficient in one of the following: Act (comedy, drama, mime), Comedy (buffoonery, limericks, joke-telling), Dance (ballet, waltz, jig), Musical instruments (one of bells, chimes, drums, fiddle, flute, gong, harp, harpsichord, lute, mandolin, pan pipes, piano, pipe organ, recorder, trumpet), Oratory (epic, ode, storytelling), Vocals (ballad, chant, melody)

Profession (type of non-labor profession, e.g., estate management, cartography, cooking, lawyer, laymen clergy) – WIS

You can practice your trade and make a decent living. You know how to use the tools of your trade, how to perform the profession's daily tasks, how to supervise helpers, and how to handle common problems.

Ride – DEX

The character is knowledgeable in the means of riding one type of mount. They can saddle, mount, ride, and dismount without a problem if not rushed but special actions while mounted require a skill check (e.g., guide your mount with knees, stay in saddle to avoid falling when your mount rears or bolts, get your mount to leap obstacles, attempt to control a mount not trained for combat while riding in battle).

Sense Motive – WIS

This use of the skill involves making an assessment of the situation. You can get the feeling from another's behavior that something is wrong, such as when you're talking to an impostor. Alternatively, you can get the feeling that someone is trustworthy.

Spot – WIS

The Spot skill is used primarily to detect characters or creatures who are hiding or to detect someone in disguise, and to read lips when you can't hear or understand what someone is saying.

Survival – WIS

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You can keep yourself and others safe and fed in the wild or to follow tracks in the wilderness.

Swim – STR

Make a Swim check once per round while you are in the water. Success means you may swim at up to one-half your speed. Swimming in armor is often impossible.

Cleric Class Skills

Ceremony (specific deity) – WIS

The character is proficient in the ceremonies of a single deity (usually their own deity). They have a deep understanding of the meanings of every action taken in the ceremonies.

Heal – WIS

The character understands how to give first-aid to save the dying. When a character falls below zero hit points, but not below -10, another character with the heal skill and attempt first-aid to save the life of the dying character. A heal skill check, if successful, will stabilize the dying character. The character must spend one week in bed rest to restore the first hit point; after this, healing proceeds at the normal rate.

Spellcraft – INT

You can identify spells and magic effects.

Fighter Class Skills

Endurance – CON

The character has the ability to perform tiring tasks for long periods of time. Each successful check allows the character to perform the task for one hour. Another check must be made every hour with a -1 cumulative penalty to the roll. When the character has completed the task or fails the check, they collapse and must rest for three times the amount of time used performing the task.

Intimidate – CHA

You can change another's behavior. If you make your skill check result, you may treat the target as very favorable, but only for the purpose of actions taken while it remains intimidated. That is, the target retains its normal attitude, but will chat, advise, offer limited help, or advocate on

your behalf while intimidated. The effect lasts as long as the target remains in your presence, and for 1d6×10 rounds afterward. After this time, the target's default attitude toward you shifts to unfavorable (or, if normally unfavorable, to immediate attack).

Leadership – CHA

A successful Leadership skill check will add +1 to the Retainer's Loyalty score. It can also be used to convince non-retainer NPCs to follow an order, but in this case, the NPCs will not follow the order if there is a good reason to not do so. The use of the Leadership skill upon an NPC does not shift their attitude to unfavorable afterward.

Magic-User Class Skills

Decipher Script – INT

You can decipher writing in an unfamiliar language or a message written in an incomplete or archaic form. This includes intricate, exotic, or very old writing.

If the check succeeds, you understand the general content of a piece of writing about one page long (or the equivalent). If the check fails, another check should be made to see if you avoid drawing a false conclusion about the text. (Success means that you do not draw a false conclusion; failure means that you do.)

Spellcraft – INT

You can identify spells and magic effects.

Thief Class Skills

Balance – DEX

You can walk on a precarious surface. A successful check lets you move at half your speed along the surface for 1 round. A failure by 4 or less means you can't move for 1 round. A failure by 5 or more means you fall.

Bluff – CHA

A successful Bluff check indicates that the target reacts as you wish, at least for a short time (usually 1 round or less) or believes something that you want it to believe. A bluff requires interaction between you and the target. Creatures unaware of you cannot be bluffed.

Decipher Script – INT

You can decipher writing in an unfamiliar language or a message written in an incomplete or archaic form. This includes intricate, exotic, or very old writing.

If the check succeeds, you understand the general content of a piece of writing about one page long (or the equivalent). If the check fails, another check should be made to see if you avoid drawing a false conclusion about the text. (Success means that you do not draw a false conclusion; failure means that you do.)

Disguise – CHA

This is the ability to change your character's appearance or impersonate another character. Your Disguise check result determines how good the disguise is. The target number of the check is determined by the situation the character is going to use the disguise. If you don't draw any attention to yourself, the GM may grant up to a +5 to the checks. If you come to the attention of people who are suspicious (such as a guard who is watching commoners walking through a city gate), a -5 may be appropriate to apply to the check.

Escape Artist – DEX

The character with the Escape Artist skill has the uncanny ability to get loose from ropes when tied up.

Forgery – INT

Forgery requires writing materials appropriate to the document being forged, enough light or sufficient visual acuity to see the details of what you're writing, wax for seals (if appropriate), and some time. To forge a document on which the handwriting is not specific to a person (military orders, a government decree, a business ledger, or the like), you need only to have seen a similar document before, and you gain a +4 bonus on your check. To forge a signature, you need an autograph of that person to copy, and you gain a +2 bonus on the check. To forge a longer document written in the hand of some particular person, a large sample of that person's handwriting is needed.

The Forgery check is made secretly by the GM, so that you're not sure how good your forgery is.

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A document that contradicts procedure, orders, or previous knowledge, or one that requires sacrifice on the part of the person checking the document can increase that character's suspicion (and thus create favorable circumstances for the checker's opposing Forgery check).

Knowledge (rumors around town) – INT

The character is knowledgeable of events in their home town or city. An evening's time, a few gold pieces for buying drinks and making new friends, and a Knowledge (rumors around town) check get you a general idea of a city's major news items, assuming there are no obvious reasons why the information would be withheld. The higher your check result, the better the information.

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Tumble – DEX

You can land softly when you fall. You can also tumble to entertain an audience (as though using the Perform skill). Treat a fall as if it were 10 feet shorter than it really is when determining damage upon a successful skill check.

Optional Skill Rules

A character may take a skill not normally allowed to his or her class; however, the cost of the skill is three skill points. For example, a 1st level fighter takes the escape artist skill. It costs 3 skill level points and the character may not select another skill until he or she reaches second level. The target number is still 17 for these skills.

Skill points per level are equal to the character's Charisma bonus with a minimum of one point per level.

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